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Lights, Camera, Action! Make Your Mark Against Multiple Sclerosis
Connecticut Chapter Announces YouTube Contest To Raise Awareness For MS

HARTFORD, Conn. – Pick up a video camera, film how multiple sclerosis has impacted your life and show the world how you're making a difference against MS.

That's the directive from the National MS Society, Connecticut Chapter as it launches the "Share Your Story" YouTube Contest to raise awareness about the disease and how it affects more than 6,000 people living in the state and their families.

"Multiple sclerosis is a potentially debilitating disease that presents itself differently in each person living with the disease," said Karen E. Butler, the chapter's vice president of communications. "We are asking people in Connecticut to share their personal story of how MS has impacted their life and how they are making a difference in fighting the disease."

Videos must be less than three minutes in length, include a call to action in the fight against MS and mailed to the chapter on disc by Monday, Jan. 31.

"Tell us your personal story about multiple sclerosis," said Butler. "It can be about yourself, a friend or family member living with the disease or a fundraising team. We want to encourage everyone to be original and show us their unique way of being involved with the fight against MS."

The submitted videos will be judged based on creativity, impact and entertainment value. The chapter is looking for a wide range of videos showing how MS affects people in the state and what people are doing in fundraising and raising awareness to make a mark against the disease. On Monday, Feb. 21, the chapter will upload the finalists' videos on its YouTube site, located at www.youtube.com/ctfightsMS.

For the next two weeks, the public is invited to view the videos and vote by giving a "thumbs up" on their favorite through YouTube. Voting will close on Friday, March 4, and the video with the most positive votes will be declared the winner.

The winning video will be played during the chapter's Awards Ceremony and Annual Meeting Sunday, March 13, at the Marriott Hotel in Rocky Hill and the winner will receive an award during the event. The ceremony coincides with the start of MS Awareness Week, which runs from Monday, March 14, to Sunday, March 20.

The video contest is part of the Connecticut Chapter's initiative to engage its constituents through social media networks. The chapter has more than 2,000 fans and followers on Facebook and Twitter and its YouTube videos have been viewed more than 31,000 times.

“We are living in an exciting time where people can connect with each other in more ways than ever,” shared Butler. “The chapter has utilized these social media networks to create a community of people in Connecticut who are united in their common goal of finding a cure for multiple sclerosis.”

More than 6,000 Connecticut residents live with multiple sclerosis, an autoimmune disease affecting the central nervous system. The cause is unknown and there currently is no cure. The progress, severity and specific symptoms of MS in any one person cannot be predicted. Funds raised for the chapter through events ensure ongoing scientific research to find a better treatments and a cure for multiple sclerosis.

To enter the contest, please submit a video file on disc and contact information to National MS Society, Connecticut Chapter, 659 Tower Ave., First Floor, Hartford, CT 06112.

For more information on the contest, please contact Sean O’Leary, communications specialist for the chapter, at soleary@ctfightsMS.org or 860-913-2550, ext. 249.

To learn more about multiple sclerosis and the many ways to get involved, please visit the chapter’s website at www.ctfightsMS.org.